

Best Start
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Rosewall Progress Report Statewide Evaluation

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1 Introduction

The development of the Northern Suburbs in Geelong coincided with the building of large housing estates for working families across the State in the 1950s. These estates were predominantly broad-acre estates with two or three bedroom houses of weatherboard and concrete construction close to industrial complexes. Corio was developed over a period of time including direct for sale properties developed in the late 1960s. The main concentration of public housing was developed during the late 1970s and 1980s. The Rosewall estate of Corio is located on the Northern-most fringe of Geelong and relatively isolated from shops and services. The borders of the Rosewall / Corio Best Start Project are Princes Highway, Montview Road, Anakie Road and Cox Road. It includes four Primary Schools, three Kindergartens, one Maternal and Child Health Centre, one Neighbourhood House as well as the Corio Bay Secondary College (where a Family Day Care In-Venue Program for 0 – 5 years operates, a registered Long Day Child Care Centre and soon a Playgroup that will network with Rosewall Playgroup Network) and the Corio Village Shopping Centre. A unique feature of this Best Start site is the small geographic size of the area.

13% of the population consists of children aged 0 – 8 years relating to the Corio postcode. This compares to 12% for Victoria as a whole. People of Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander make up 0.8% of the population. Of the 2862 families with children under 15 years in the area, a single parent headed 37%. 22.9% of the area's residents were born overseas.

Geelong's rate of unemployment has been between 4% to 6% in 2001. However the rate of unemployment is significantly higher in Norlane and Corio, which has been consistently three times higher than the Geelong average.

2 Partnership

Context

The origins of the Rosewall Best Start partnership were quite different from the other sites as it was formed due to the decisive actions of the local school principals. One principal in particular recognised that unless barriers were addressed regarding health, education and social wellbeing, then the children would be disadvantaged in their educational opportunities.

The partnership has evolved into three working groups to address the specific areas that were highlighted in the Community Consultation Groups. The groups are: Parenting, Child Development/Learning and Community Living. A noticeable feature of this site is the way that some issues and projects link across all three working groups. This has meant that projects can enhance not only the indicator that is the major focus of the project, but compliment the other projects as well.

The Rosewall Best Start partnership is committed to striving to improve the health, development, learning and well being of the children and families in the Rosewall/Corio area. This is geographically a small area and the partnership group is a very contained one. The membership of the Rosewall partnership has also been one of the most stable, and only one person has left due to a change in job that meant relocation to outside the Best Start site.

Implementation

The Rosewall Best Start project is based on a participatory action research approach, which encourages active engagement of community participants. The actions are determined through research, community consultation and continually revisiting the objectives in a reflective manner. Through this critical reflection, actions can be deconstructed and projects evolved to better meet the needs of the community. Community partnerships are expected to build through trust and time.

The history of Geelong is said to play a part in laying the foundations of how groups work with each other in the area, as even though Geelong is a city, it is still a relatively small city. In fact when people move from one job to another, personal relationships are already quite established, as people tend to know each other through other associations. People appear to be very conscious of making links and

that it is a good method of working. The Best Start community facilitator actively works to maintain and develop further links to compliment the work of Best Start.

There are already strong networks active in the area to which the Best Start community facilitator connects. One such network, Community Agents of Sustainability (CAOS), has been running monthly meetings for the past year and is open to any worker in any aspect of community services. It has been reported that up to 50 people are now active members of this network. Another network entitled Communities in Action being run through the City of Greater Geelong Council brings together managers of services and focuses on strategic planning. The connections made within these networks by the Best Start community facilitator are then brought back to the Best Start partnership to expand the possibilities of Rosewall Best Start.

The community facilitator sees her role as both one of being a ‘grass roots’ worker and also a facilitator. This is viewed as vital for the sustainability of Rosewall Best Start projects as due to the small size of the site both ‘getting the jobs done on the ground’ and standing back and facilitating are called for. By becoming involved, the Best Start community facilitator has been able to create a certain level of enthusiasm that has transferred to others who have then become involved in the partnership themselves.

Benefits to date

Managers and workers on the ground see the level of cooperation between all levels of the partnership as a benefit. Those around them support those involved, whether it is in a co-worker relationship or at a managerial level. Members of the partnership appear to have a shared understanding of the value of allowing people to step away from their ‘normal’ jobs to be involved in the partnership because they can see the long-term benefits. Partnership members hold similar philosophies, which has added to a collective attitude and moved Best Start Rosewall forward.

Barriers to date

The only difficulty to date has been to ensure that enthusiasm has been maintained, therefore some projects needed to be activated so that members could see that something ‘on the ground’ was happening.

3 Indicators

3.1 Health & Wellbeing

3.1.1 Breastfeeding

Projects

Rosewall has no specific projects addressing breastfeeding as early consultation with the community and the appropriate professionals indicated there was sufficient information being delivered through Maternity and the M&CH service.

Data

There were no significant differences in the rates of breastfeeding in Greater Geelong compared to the rest of regional Victoria in any year. However, this data suggests that breastfeeding may be an important area to target in this community.

Table 1a: Breastfeeding in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

Variable	2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003	
	%	RR (95%CI)	%	RR (95%CI)	%	RR (95%CI)
Breastfeeding at 3 months	53.0	0.97 (0.94-1.02)	52.3	1.02 (0.98-1.07)	49.6	0.97 (0.93-1.02)
Breastfeeding at 6 months	41.0	1 (0.95-1.05)	39.0	0.98 (0.93-1.04)	38.8	0.97 (0.92-1.02)

Updated Data (June, 2005)

Rates of breastfeeding at three months were not different from state comparator in Geelong. Rates of breastfeeding at six months were not different from the state comparator in Geelong.

Table 1b: Breastfeeding in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

Variable	2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003		2003-2004	
	%	RR(95% CI)	%	RR(95% CI)	%	RR(95% CI)	%	RR(95% CI)
At 3 months	53.0	0.97(0.94-1.02)	52.3	1.02(0.98-1.07)	49.6	0.97(0.93-1.02)	48.3	0.96(0.91-1)
At 6 months	41.0	1(0.95-1.05)	39.0	0.98(0.93-1.04)	38.8	0.97(0.92-1.02)	37.4	0.97(0.92-1.03)

3.1.2 Women smoking during pregnancy

Projects

Rosewall has no specific projects addressing women smoking during pregnancy, however opportunities have arisen to connect to initiatives that advocate the non-smoking message. Early community consultations in November, 2003 and discussions with the Co-ordinator of Community Child Health (City of Greater Geelong), indicated that there was sufficient information and activity through Maternity and the M&CH service. The Parenting Working Group revisited this indicator early in 2005 and was fortunate to have a representative from QUIT, who was attending a seminar in the area, present at the meeting. Also represented at the meeting were Barwon Health Share Maternity Care and the GP Association. This meeting provided the opportunity for work already happening in the area relating to this indicator to be highlighted and links established with this Parenting Working Group and outside organisations. Share Maternity Care is targeting all women for smoking cessation with early intervention before 20 weeks of pregnancy. Data has been collected via Barwon Health but at this stage the data has not been analysed as it needs to be matched to individual files which is a time consuming process. Barwon Health has taken on the role of keeping the Working Party informed of progress. Questions such as: What has worked for vulnerable families? What approaches are there to reduce the number of women smoking during pregnancy? The five A's Framework, which is under the National Smoking Cessation Commonwealth Guidelines, has been very successful across Victoria and the training will focus on this.

A variety of QUIT training is available that can be tailored to specific groups and discussion has taken place relating to the types of training available. It is under consideration that GP's in the four Medical Centres in the Best Start area and the M&CH service staff (including the outreach service), as well as the primary schools, playgroups and kindergarten professionals receive training. One barrier raised is the difficulty of co-ordinating a common time for these professionals to participate in this training with their already high workloads, however, the possibility of QUIT running this training in July is being considered. The link with QUIT has also seen the QUIT Health Promotion Packages distributed to every M&CH centre in the City of Greater Geelong. The QUIT Training is planned for October, 2005 and the Parenting Working Group will continue to work closely with the GP Association and Maternal Child Health.

March 06

The QUIT Training was attended by 9 professionals from Geelong Hospital, MCH Centre and Outreach Nurses, Barwon Health Community Nurse, Bethany Community Support and the Geelong GP Association. No local GPs were able to attend.

The presentation was informative and provided some active discussions about the 5A's Framework for Smoking Cessation. All who attended reported that it was valuable training. The networking opportunity was reported to be helpful.

Barriers

The time and structure of the training had been designed to enable the local GP's to attend. But the busy schedules and the unexpected needs of the clients made it difficult for the doctors to attend.

The other professionals did note the local GP's absence. It was a missed opportunity for professional relationship building.

Benefits

The professionals did feel they were provided with relevant information and knowledge.

The lunch time training, with food provided, did enable people to fit in with their busy schedules.

The Geelong GP Association became involved through this initiative and do continue to receive the Best Start Partnership minutes. We will continue to build on this association as they need arises with other health initiatives.

The information received in the 5 A's package will be delivered through the Healthy Living sessions to parents, Playgroup information, the Parent Morning Teas at Rosewall Café and Universal Services Information Forums(Play Days for Families). Consistent health education and promotion will be delivered through a multi-layered approach through multi service providers

3.1.3 Immunisation

Projects

Rosewall has no specific projects targeting immunisation; however, the promotion of immunization is being enhanced through the Smiles 4 Miles Dental Health strategy.

March06

The co-location of the Immunisation Program and Smiles 4 Miles has been successful for the promotion and attendance of both programs.

There is evidence to support the awareness of families choosing to attend this specific immunisation site referred from maternal child health nurses due to the access to oral health promotion and access to services. There is also an increased awareness of dental health by immunisation staff, staff now referring at other sites.

Data

There were no significant differences in the rates of immunisation at any age in Greater Geelong compared to the rest of regional Victoria in any year. This data supports the exclusion of a project in this area.

Table 2a: Immunisation in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

Variable	2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003	
	%	RR (95%CI)	%	RR (95%CI)	%	RR (95%CI)
Immunisation (1 year)	92.2	1 (0.99-1.01)	91.0	0.99 (0.97-1)	92.1	1 (0.98-1.01)
Immunisation (2 year)	89.7	1.02 (1.01-1.04)	92.1	1.01 (1-1.03)	92.0	1 (0.99-1.01)
Immunisation (6 year)					87.7	1 (0.99-1.01)

Updated Data (June, 2005)

Immunisation rates for one year olds were the same as the state comparator for Geelong in all years.

Immunisation rates for two year olds were the same as the state comparator for Geelong in all years.

Immunisation rates for six year olds were the same as the state comparator for Geelong in all years.

Table 2b: Immunisation in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

Variable	2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003		2003-2004	
	%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)
1 year	92.2	1(0.99-1.01)	91.0	0.99(0.97-1)	92.1	1(0.98-1.01)	92.4	1(0.98-1.01)
2 year	89.7	1.02(1.01-1.04)	92.1	1.01(1-1.03)	92.0	1(0.99-1.01)	94.2	1.01(1-1.02)
6 year					87.7	1(0.99-1.01)	87.6	1(87.55-1)

3.1.4 Attendance at M&CH Centre

Project

There is one project specifically targeting M&CH attendance, *ROS01 Maternity and Maternal Child Health Project*.

Rose wall's Maternity and M&CH project has two components to it – the part recorded in this section focuses on the promotion of the Ages and Stages visits at M&CH Centres. The project is primarily focusing on the 12-month and the 3.5 year assessments to increase the attendance rates at these visits.

The other component of this project deals with a strengthening of the cooperation and collaboration between maternity services and maternal child health to provide a smooth transition to support families. This component is recorded under Section 5.4.7. Service Coordination.

The project also links with the *ROS03 Dental Project* and *ROS04 Child and Adult Literacy Project* by distributing Best Start bags containing a dental kit and a book when the parents attend these visits. M&CH attendance is addressed in the Rosewall project largely as an adjunct to dental health and literacy promotion strategies. Parent educational information will accompany these Best Start bags. As research has demonstrated that the number of families attending the 3.5 year assessments is considerably lower than the 0 – 12 month visits the Best Start bags are seen as an incentive for parents to attend this visit. This will occur over a six-month period and then be reviewed to determine if this strategy will continue. Other strategies such as outreach visits to targeted services and the promotion of the M&CH service through playgroup are also incorporated into this project. This project is targeting families with children aged 12 months and 3.5 years.

ROS01 - Maternity and Maternal Child Health Project

Outcomes hierarchy	Progress to date	Success Criterion
Increase in the number of families attending the 12 month and Ages and Stages 3.5 year assessments	Future Stage	
Community more aware of the importance of the Ages and Stages M&CH visits	Future Stage	Anecdotal evidence
Promotion of attendance of Ages & Stages visits across playgroup network by Playgroup Facilitator	Ongoing	Visits promoted across playgroup network (3 playgroups)
Auspice of M&CH Playgroup shifted to Rosewall Neighbourhood House and newly appointed Playgroup Facilitator to build strong links with M&CH Centre	Ongoing	Collaboration between the Rosewall Playgroup Network, including City of Greater Geelong, Rosewall Neighbourhood House & Best Start
Promotion of the importance of the Ages & Stages visit through childcare & kindergarten services	Ongoing	Childcare & kindergarten promote visits
Enhanced relationship between childcare & kindergarten staff & M&CH service	Ongoing	Co-operative relationship established
Outreach visits to Child Care Centres and Kindergartens	Completed	Outreach visits carried out
Link with Innovations Project (City of Greater Geelong Feb-May) 3.5 Year Pre School Checks (Gift of a small 'Showbag' at visit)	Completed	Co-operation between Best Start & the Innovations Project established. Collective resourcing. 'Showbags' distributed at visits
Roll out of Dental Kits linked to Ages and Stages visits	Completed	Distribution of kits
Promotion of the Dental and Literacy Kits with information linking to Age and Stage M&CH visits in the community	Completed	Promotion carried out
Development of Dental and Literacy Kits with information linking to Age and Stage M&CH visits	Completed	Kits developed

Implementation

The Parenting Working group that is responsible for this project has been meeting on a regular basis and has begun implementing strategies. The dental and literacy kits have been prepared and distributed. Distribution of these kits continued until November, 2004. Flyers promoting the kits were distributed at strategic points in the community – doctor's clinics, kindergartens, primary schools, Barwon Health

Community Centre, shopping centres, playgroups, Neighbourhood Houses, and also promotion material appeared in community newsletters. In May, the kits were promoted at the Corio community festival with 150 kits given out during this festival. As a way of further promoting the kits, the foyer of the M&CH Centre was also set up with parent educational / health information.

The M&CH City of Greater Geelong Co-ordinator and the Corio M&CH Nurse continued to build on the Best Start strategies. With the Geelong Innovations project focusing on intensive Maternal & Child Health services for families, a link between this initiative and Best Start has seen the development of a 'showbag' to be given as a gift when presenting for the 3.5 year old visit. Best Start providing the funds for the blocks and crayons which were included in the 'showbags'.

Outreach visits were organised to City Learning and Care Centres (Child Care) and Kindergartens with parents either agreeing to attend checks with the child or give permission for check when they couldn't attend. A session specifically for 3.5 year olds has been in operation every Wednesday from February-May 2005 with the 'Showbag' given out at the visit. The Outreach Team has been targeting two and three year olds to promote the importance of the Ages and Stages visit - EHVS (Enhanced Home Visiting Team) and PASDS (Parent Assessment and Skill Development Services).

March 06

The visits by the Maternal Child Health Nurse to the Child Care Centres, has been well received, although it has taken 12 month period to see an increase in this project.

This project is an initiative of the 'Innovations' funding but Best Start has supported the initiative by supplying resources for the 'showbag' and supporting the linkages between the two projects in the Corio area. The prompts provided at the Kindergarten Orientation/enrolment days have assisted parents to attend the 3.5 year check. The Kindergartens and the MCH Centre have worked cooperatively on these initiatives.

The change to the auspice of the local playgroup has also impacted on this project. Administration responsibilities of Hendy St Playgroup shifted to the auspice of the Rosewall Neighbourhood House. Early consultations with this Playgroup identified the administration duties were a barrier to the continuation of this group. Parents with new babies (plus other siblings) were finding it difficult to manage the administration. Playgroup was becoming a burden rather than an enjoyable experience. Family Services Community Development Worker, City of Greater Geelong, the Co-ordinator Rosewall Neighbourhood House and Best Start Facilitator met with the M&CH Nurse and in agreement with the parents decided to shift the management under the auspice of the Neighbourhood House. The Playgroup would still operate from the Hendy St. site but be relieved of the administration and would be part of the Rosewall Playgroup Network. This has meant that the newly appointed playgroup facilitator had the opportunity to build strong links with M&CH services as she networks with three playgroups and also runs Positive Parenting Program training.

March 06

The Hendy St Playgroup has been able to function without the stress of the financial management and operates independently with the Facilitator providing a valuable reference point and resources. As this group is particularly with small babies (with prams etc) they are requiring more space so as they can increase their numbers to cover the costs of the room rental. The cost of room hire is an ongoing issue for this playgroup. It is a small room, so only allows space for 4-5 parents and children, therefore making it a high cost (set local government fee) for each parent.

City of Greater Geelong is exploring the costs of hire of rooms for playgroups as there are anomalies with hire costs across the municipality. There is a new community hall being built next to the MCH Centre so there is the option for the group to move there and the Playgroup Facilitator will promote this group to increase their numbers to achieve sustainability. But the link between MCH and the Playgroups will continue to be maintained

Benefits to date

There was a lot of interest and enthusiasm generated by the profiling of the Best Start initiative at the Corio Community Festival. Discussions with many parents ensued on the day and the Barwon Community Health Centre, whose variety of services families appeared to have limited knowledge about, was promoted along with the Neighbourhood House.

The M&CH 'Showbag' Ages and Stages strategy, 3.5 years check (Innovations Project) has enhanced the relationship between the Child Care and Kindergarten staff with the MCH Centre. The early childhood staffs now promote the visits as 'very important' for the children prior to commencing school.

The attendance of Ages and Stages visits promoted by the Playgroup Facilitator has enabled this message to be carried to the three playgroups that she networks. It has also enabled the importance of M&CH visits to be promoted in the Positive Parenting Program training that she conducts.

Barriers to date

There is limited time available to M&CH staff to promote the kits and follow up families who are not attending. M&CH staff is committed professionals who need to prioritize their time to focus on the clinical components of their role. They do have, in their close association with parents, a community development role but this requires time. Could a Community Development Worker compliment the M&CH Nurses duties and provide that extended link to the broader community universal services? The auspice of playgroups - availability of funds to employ a playgroup facilitator to network across a number of playgroups and act to relieve the administration burden from parents. There is a need for playgroups to have a central organisational point to strengthen the network, but this takes money.

Data

Home consultations were significantly higher in 2001-02 and 2002-03. There were no significant differences in the rates of participation in Ages and Stages visits in M&CH services in Greater Geelong compared to the rest of regional Victoria in any year where comparison was possible. It should be noted that use in smaller regional areas is not necessarily reflected in LGA level data.

Table 3a: M&CH in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

Variable	2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003	
	%	RR (95%CI)	%	RR (95%CI)	%	RR (95%CI)
Participation in Home Consultation (0-1 years)	102.4	-	100.6	-	101.3	-
Participation in Ages and Stages Visit (3.5 years)	52.6	0.99 (0.95-1.04)	50.1	1 (0.95-1.04)	48.3	0.97 (0.93-1.01)

Updated Data (June, 2005)

The rate of participation in home consultations was the same or higher than the state comparator in Geelong. The rate of participation in Ages and Stages 3.5 year visit was the same or higher than the state comparator in Geelong.

Table 3b: Participation in Home Consultation (0-1 years) in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003		2003-2004	
%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)
102.4	1.09(-)	100.6	1.08(1.071.08)	101.3	1.1(1.1-1.1)	100.0	1.07(1.06-1.07)

Invalid values occur for confidence intervals at some sites because the participation is over 100% according to DHS figures

Table 3c: Participation in Ages and Stages Visit (3.5 years) in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003		2003-2004	
%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)
52.6	0.99(0.95-.04)	50.1	1(0.95-1.04)	48.3	0.97(0.93-1.01)	50.0	0.96(0.92-1)

3.1.5 Attendance at hospital emergency

Projects

There are no projects specifically addressing emergency room attendance in Rosewall.

Data

The rates of hospitalisation for asthma and gastroenteritis were lower in Greater Geelong compared to the rest of regional Victoria in 1999-2000 to 2001-02. There were no significant differences in 2002-03. This data confirms Rosewall decision not to focus on this indicator.

Table 4a: Hospital admissions in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

Variable	1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003	
	per 1000	RR (95%CI)	per 1000	RR (95%CI)	per 1000	RR (95%CI)	Per 1000	RR (95%CI)
Asthma admissions (0-8 years)	4.28	0.38 (0.3-0.46)	5.84	0.54 (0.45-0.65)	3.89	0.41 (0.33-0.52)	3.29	0.82 (0.65-1.05)
Gastroenteritis (0 years)	11.71	0.5 (0.33-0.75)	14.15	0.66 (0.45-0.96)	12.9	0.64 (0.43-0.95)	14.72	1.45 (0.99-2.11)

Updated Data (June, 2005)

There were generally no differences in the rate of asthma admission for wave one Best Start sites and the state comparator. There was a significant difference in the rate of asthma admission in Geelong where the asthma admission rate was significantly lower than the state comparator from 1999/2000 to 2001/2002.

There was a significant difference for Geelong in the rate of gastroenteritis where the gastroenteritis admission rate was significantly lower than the state comparator from 1999/2000 to 2001/2002.

Table 4b: Asthma admissions (0-8 years) in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

Variable	1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002		2002-2003		2003-2004	
	per 1000	RR(95%CI)	per 1000	RR(95%CI)	per 1000	RR(95%CI)	per 1000	RR(95%CI)	per 1000	
Asthma admissions (0-8 years)	4.28	0.38(0.3-0.46)	5.84	0.54(0.45-0.65)	3.89	0.41(0.33-0.52)	3.29	0.82(0.65-1.05)	3.86	0.81(0.54-1.2)
Gastroenteritis (0 years)	11.71	0.5(0.33-0.75)	14.1	0.66(0.45-0.96)	12.94	0.64(0.43-0.95)	14.7	1.45(0.99-2.11)	10.9	1.01(0.66-1.55)

3.1.6 Children's Diet and Physical Activity

Projects

Rosewall has two projects that specifically target children's diet and physical health. These projects are entitled *Healthy Living Plan* and the *Dental Health Project*.

The Healthy Living Plan evolved through a series of discussions both with parent groups and service providers. The recognition that good health is intrinsically linked to early childhood development; learning and social wellbeing became evident in every project-planning meeting.

Under the *Healthy Living Plan* there are a number of initiatives some of which are directly linked to Best Start and some of which are complementary. This project has a broad agenda to reflect the various and complex needs that are intertwined with the five other projects, consequently it does not fit neatly under an indicator category. It is listed under diet because this is consistent with a number of activities included and does capture the emphasis on dental health. All the working groups have components of work connected to this project. Strategies include the 'Healthy Kids, Healthy Relationships' Project,

the Wellbeing Enhancement Framework and the Feeling Safe – Being Strong: Building Healthy Relationships Project.

The Wellbeing enhancement framework is funded by the DHS and is an initiative of the Community Care Division (CCD), which currently funds a number of universal and secondary services that contribute to the achievement of improved health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people.

Feeling Safe – Being Strong: Building Healthy Relationships is another initiative emanating from the Bethany Early Intervention and Violence Prevention Project ‘Feeling Safe, Being Strong’ which is based on the ‘Schools Domestic Violence Preventative strategy’ developed and broadly implemented in the United Kingdom. The project works in conjunction with DHS, key local schools, relevant community organisations and the Best Start project. The Bethany Project officer has the job of developing and implementing the project within identified schools over a twelve-month period. The two schools identified are Corio Primary School and Rosewall Primary School. The project is delivered in the classroom with the classroom teacher promoting positive responses and healthy and resilient children.

The Dental Health Project was identified in the Community Consultation Groups as a major health issue in the Corio area. In December 2003 the Barwon Primary Care Partnership (PCP) forum distributed a report ‘A Review of Dental Health in Geelong’ which had been created on behalf of the Geelong Strategic Municipal Plan. This report was a result of previous community consultations in 2001 in which ‘access to dental services’ was raised as a priority. The report established that the Barwon South West Region had consistently higher averages of dental decay in children than the Victorian average.

March 2006

After School Activity Program

Best Start has funded this project to increase primary school children’s access and participation in sporting and recreational and develop a community based exercise program which will be held in community sporting settings. Rosewall Primary School and Leisure Networks will link with the relevant sport clubs to be involved in the program.

Participants will be offered social or playing membership of the club or association. This is integral to the program as participants of ASAP should be able to return to the club outside of project hours.

ROS02 - Healthy Living Plan

Outcomes hierarchy	Progress to date	Success Criterion
March 2006 After School Activity Program funded to encourage children in physical activity and links to community sport settings	Project funded with partnership between Leisure Networks, City of Greater Geelong, Rosewall Primary School and Best Start	Partnership collaboration and objective to link local sport and recreational communities.
March 2006 Smiles 4 Miles, Romp and Chomp and Best Start delivering key nutrition messages	Collaboration between the three projects.	The cooperation between the projects to ensure a consolidated approach and sustainability
Improved access to universal health services and families embracing good health practises	Future Stage	Anecdotal evidence
Service provision framework for sites developed	Future Stage	Framework developed
Healthy Living parenting sessions repeated for parent groups as requested by parents after 2004 sessions. Linking in now with the Romp and	Ongoing	Parenting sessions delivered. Relevant resource (Healthy Kids, Healthy Relationships)

Chomp project		that can network with the Best Start sites network & compliment other Healthy Living Projects. A local parent delivering resource
Rosewall Primary School initiating innovative practices linked to broader health promotion & strong community links	Ongoing	Innovative practices developed and initiated
Presentation at the Barwon Primary Care Forum sponsored Healthy Schools Forum by the Principal Rosewall Primary School on the Rosewall Community Garden	Completed	Presentation carried out
Going Potty Garden and Arts Festival - Promotion of healthy eating and recreational activity. Life Be In It activities. Life Be In it has it's first Learning Centre operating out of the Rosewall Primary School	Completed	Positive promotion of 'our' community & a real sense of 'ownership'. Health promotion at a broad community level. Positive feedback from the community of Best Start health promotion activities
Implementing Rosewall Community Garden. Joint initiative between Rosewall Neighbourhood House and Rosewall Primary School in Connections Park	Completed	Participation in the community park & a collective approach by Neighbourhood Renewal, Neighbourhood House & the Primary School
Smiles 4-Miles Project. Health Promotion via 6 Preschools. Drink Well: H2O and Eat Well: Healthy Snack Programs	Completed	Water bottles distributed in all 3 kindergartens. Lunch boxes containing fruit distributed. Kindergartens embracing the health promotion of Smiles 4 Miles. Evaluation Report
Linking in of the Geelong Healthy Eating and Active Play Under 5's Project and representation on the Smiles 4 Miles Working Party	Ongoing	Participation on Smiles 4 Miles Working Party
Identify and engage key service providers who work in mental health	Ongoing	Key services identified. Collaboration with these services
Mobilising community resources for children's diet and physical activity	Ongoing	Co-ordination of community resources
'Healthy Kids, Healthy Relationships' Project implemented	Ongoing	Implementation of 'Healthy Kids, Healthy Relationships' project
Development of strategies to promote health and access to service treatment	Completed	Strategies identified
Community resources mapped and gaps established	Completed	Resources and gaps mapped

ROS03 - Dental Health Project

Outcomes hierarchy	Progress to date	Success Criterion
March 06 Smiles 4 Miles and Romp and Chomp Project to work collaboratively to promote key nutrition messages S4M working with Best Start in local Kindergartens in 2006 and local Playgroups in 2006	Meeting to plan integration of both projects Health promotion and access to services	Consolidation of projects in a partnership to deliver key nutrition messages. The success in the Kindergarten allows for the expansion in to the Playgroups.

	delivered to Playgroups	
Identification and access to treatment implemented. Corio Community Health Centre Immunisation co-located with dental service. Treatment pathway to Community Dental Program	Ongoing	A pathway to accessible treatment within a reasonable time-frame. Evaluation Report
Preschools implementing Oral Health Promotion - Drink Well: H2O and Eat Well: Healthy Snack Programs	Ongoing	Consolidation & uniform approach from the Kindergarten teachers. A willingness to work co-operatively with the Smiles 4 Miles project
Smiles 4 Miles target group now 0-5 years not just four year olds	Completed	Change in age of target group. (The community consultations & the Working Groups had always indicated the target group needed to be from birth & inclusive of siblings)
Healthy Eating and Active Play Under 5's Project (Romp and Stomp) representatives join Smiles 4 Miles Working Group	Completed	Willingness to work collaboratively for effective health promotion. A consolidated approach rather than duplicating strategies
Distribution of Stage 2 and 3 of Dental Kits - Kindergartens/Playgroups and Primary Schools	Completed	Positive health promotion highlighting the early intervention of oral health (0-8). Families, particularly children, 'talking' about dental care
Implementing Kindergarten pilot of the 'Smiles 4 Miles' oral health project	Ongoing	Kindergarten pilot implemented
The 'Smile 4 Miles' working group established	Completed	Working group established
Final pilot proposal presented to Dental Project partnership	Completed	Presentation of proposal
Distribution of Stage 1 of Dental Kits	Completed	Kits distributed – Stage 1
Festival launch of Dental Kits	Completed	Dental Kits launched at festival
Preschool Dental Health Forum	Completed	Forum held
Launch of Oral Health Promotion Resources Pack for Children's Services	Completed	Health Promotion Resources Pack launched
Partnership formed with Dental Health Services Victoria to implement targeted kindergarten oral health project	Completed	Partnership formed & targeted project implemented
Dental Health Kits developed	Completed	Kits developed
Formation of Dental Health partnership	Completed	Partnership established
Identification of issues in early childhood dental health in community and access to available services	Completed	Issues identified

Implementation

ROS02 The *Healthy Kids, Healthy Relationships* project has seen the development of a joint approach by Bethany Community Support and the Parenting Unit, City of Greater Geelong. Initially five community consultations were held with an average attendance of 8–10 people. From these consultations it was decided that the 'Healthy Kids, Healthy Relationships' Project that promotes positive self esteem, healthy eating, physical activity and body satisfaction for 0 – 12 year olds would be a suitable project to help meet community needs. The project has been implemented with four parent groups and one family day care group and has received positive feedback. In collaboration with the

student support worker at North Shore Primary School, another *Healthy Kids, Healthy Relationships* project is being implemented into the school. A parent from the Rosewall Primary Breakfast Club completed the two-day training to be able to deliver the project to relevant parent groups. This parent has delivered five sessions to various community groups. Topics included budget cooking, self esteem in children and understanding nutritional needs. The groups requested further sessions in 2005. Five more sessions are planned for Term 4, 2005. The parent is now employed by Neighbourhood Renewal and as her portfolio is Healthy Living, she is working with Best Start, Barwon Health (Smiles 4 Miles & Under 5's Healthy Eating and Active Play) and Bethany Community Support to provide training that reflects a consistent health message from all the associated groups health promotion.

The Wellbeing enhancement framework has been considered for inclusion in Best Start Rosewall. The community facilitator distributed a draft framework to ensure that follow-up discussion can focus on how the tool can be best utilised. Discussions between the community facilitator and the DHS Barwon Region advisor regarding time frames of this initiative and the expectations of the focus group continue.

The Feeling Safe – Being Strong: Building Healthy Relationships project is under development at this stage.

ROS03 *Dental Health Project* - Community consultations were conducted throughout September and October, 2003 with the overwhelming response from parents of the lack of access to dental treatment for their children. At this stage of the Dental Health project there is a demonstration of commitment to work collectively and collaboratively with Barwon Primary Care partnership forum, Barwon Health Dental Services, Dental Health Services Victoria and the Best Start Parenting working group. Dental Kits have been assembled with the Barwon Health Dental Services accessing toothbrushes and toothpaste for the dental kits. These kits were launched at the Corio Community Festival in May and distribution of these kits staggered over three stages. Prior to each delivery an education strategy that includes a generic dental health poster and information display, with the addition of a more individualised directive depending on which group is being targeted, is presented. Tooth Tips information is also delivered to all parents.

Dental Health Services Victoria approached Rosewall Best Start Dental working group to be involved in a kindergarten dental health pilot project titled: 'Smiles 4 Miles'. This project has two components to it - access to treatment and health promotion focusing on the child the year prior to school. A working group for this was formed comprising of DHS, Barwon Primary Care Partnership, Barwon Dental Health Services (Community Dental Project), Barwon Health Immunisation Project, Best Start Rosewall, Neighbourhood Renewal and the Dental Health Services Victoria (School Dental Project). The 'Smiles 4 Miles' pilot project began in Norlane / Corio and continues through 2005. This project was publicised in the local newspaper with health promotion happening in kindergartens e.g.. Distribution of water bottles. 'Tooth Tips' sheets have been purchased for M&CH Centres and the purchasing of six videos is also under consideration to be used for parents at the 'new parent' introductory sessions. Geelong Healthy Eating and Active Play under 5's Project (Romp and Chomp) representatives have joined the Smiles 4 Miles Working Group. The aim of Romp and Chomp Project is to increase the capacity of the Geelong community to promote healthy eating and physical activity and to achieve healthy weight in under 5's. As the 'Healthy Eating' objectives is similar health promotion to the Smiles 4 Miles Project it is positive capacity building to have a collaborative approach between the two projects. The target group, Smile 4 Miles, has been extended to 0-5 years rather than just 'child prior to commencing school'. The Best Start Parenting Working Group and Barwon Dental Health had always advocated that the intervention and access to treatment needed to start earlier as evidence (Barwon Health Primary Care Forum) demonstrated this need.

Other activities include the Kindergartens implementing a prevention strategy with Drink Well: H2O and Eat Well: Healthy Snack Programs. The local Geelong radio station broadcasting from the Rosewall Primary School one morning highlighting the Breakfast Club and the Life Be in It Learning Centre that is now based there. The holding of a Healthy Schools Forum - Sponsored by the Barwon Primary Care Forum which saw a collaborative presentation by School Principals, Nutrition Australia, Leisure Works and Be Active, Eat Well Program, Colac.

Benefits to date

ROS 02 – The feedback from the five sessions delivered of the *Healthy Kids, Healthy Relationships Project* was very positive with Best Start Rosewall receiving requests for the project to be repeated with other health / hygiene / budgeting topics. The innovative collaboration between Barwon Health, Neighbourhood Renewal, Best Start and Bethany Community Support for consistent, shared health promotion is another reflection of the willingness to share resources and avoid duplication.

ROS03 – While it is still early days in this project the enthusiasm is high and the shared knowledge within the joint dental health approach is positive. Links are being established with the Under 5's Child Obesity Project. A Dental therapist will be working with the 'Smiles 4 Miles' project from 2005. Children are receiving treatment and parents are receiving the correct information. There is a firm commitment from local stakeholders, particularly the involvement of the Healthy Eating and Active Play under 5's Project (Romp and Chomp). Enthusiasm and ongoing involvement in constructive working party meetings continues. Another benefit has been the ability to link in the Best Start connections with Smiles 4 Miles and the Romp and Chomp Project. Local preschool staff is enthusiastic about their involvement in the project, and families, children at playgroups, kindergartens and schools are talking about dental health and 'what is in their lunch box'. The sustaining effect the dental therapist 'demonstration' of the sugar content of drinks other than water has had on children and parents. This has been seen as a powerful visual message. The 'Smiles 4 Miles' program has won a Barwon Health Quality Project award.

March 06

- *Active nutrition and water policies in the three Best Start kindergarten supported with water bottles and lunch boxes in all kindergartens*
- *Education resource kits, from Dental Health Services Victoria, used by all kindergartens to fit in with the curriculum*
- *Pre and post snack-box audit demonstrated an increase in healthy snacks in lunch boxes with all three kindergartens.*
- *Coke demo, lunch box talk has been effective tools for parent education. Delivered in Kindergartens, Playgroups and Community Festivals.*
- *Supporting kindergarten staff to identify risk factors and supplying them with a referral pathway. Direct referrals from kindergartens are not as effective as we thought it would be. Further plans to work with the teachers to improve referrals*

Barriers to date

Lack of availability of dental treatment has been a problem with waiting lists of up to two years. Best Start has been a pivotal platform for connecting universal services. Where will the resources come from to sustain the base for integrated programs? Maintaining the enthusiasm and involvement from local preschool staff may be difficult over time. Challenge to continue the improved communication between the Community Dental Health Program, School Dental Health Service and Dental Health Services Victoria.

3.1.7 Community /Local safety

Projects

There are no projects specifically targeting community / local safety.

There has always been strong links with the Neighbourhood Renewal Project and Best Start has been involved with the City of Greater Geelong Communities In Action Working Group, which has a strong focus on community safety. The following initiatives & activities have been supported by Best Start:

- Northerly Aspects Community Newsletter-local news/activities for local people
- C.L.A.N- Community Liaison Action Network for Norlane and Corio Community Groups- an active 'voice' in the community with links to the City of Greater Geelong
- Connections Park - a community park to be shared and cared for by the community through the Neighbourhood House, the Primary School, the Kindergarten and the Playgroups. A place to feel safe and enjoy
- 'Going Potty' Community Festival - Arts and Environmental focus- a celebration of the community and recognition of the people in the community. The participation in the festival has given a stronger sense of 'our' community and with that is attached a stronger feeling of safety and connection to the community

- Established links with the Corio Shopping Centre - the main hub of the Corio area. The Shopping Centre has donated over 1000 packets of texta's, which will be used in the Primary Schools for a Community Safety Art Competition.
- Commitment with the Shopping Centre to work collaboratively for capacity building in the local area
- At the heart of the Rosewall Neighbourhood is an expanse of unused (and perceived unsafe) open space (Connections Park) that connects the area via a series of paths in and out of courts and streets. The school, the kindergarten, the Neighbourhood house, the local shops and homes all back on to this space. The community is concerned that the lack of high visibility has an enormous impact on community safety. The Connections Park Steering Group is supported by: The Rosewall Primary School, Rosewall Neighbourhood Centre, Communities in Action Streets-ahead Community Building Project (City of Greater Geelong), Neighbourhood Renewal and Best Start.

March 06

The Connections Park now has a dedicated worker through the Neighbourhood Renewal Project. Volunteers are still involved but since the dedicated worker (parent in the community) has been involved the park has gone from strength to strength.

'The 'Open Space Plan, which includes the barren land around the Rosewall 'hub', has been led by the City of Greater Geelong and the Neighbourhood House. Best Start attends the meetings and supports the strategy through the Community Living Working Group. The plans to transform this land with better roads and pathways, lights and landscape gardening will dramatically change this area and create a safer welcoming environment. This will positively impact on the Rosewall Kindergarten, the Rosewall Playgroup Network, the Rosewall Neighbourhood House and the Rosewall Primary School. The physical transformation will also be an attraction to families in the wider Corio community.

3.2 Education & Schooling

3.2.1 Parents reading to their children

Project

Rosewall has one project that specifically targets this indicator, *Promotion of Child and Adult Literacy Project (ROS04)*. This project is aimed at improving reading levels of the children and supporting families in accessing resources and building confidence with literacy skills. The service providers, the school principals, the early literacy teachers, the Barwon Health speech therapist, the school nurse (DHS), family service workers from Glastonbury and Bethany, form the Child Development/Learning Working Group and all have responsibility for this project. A strong component of this project is to develop sustainable links with the Geelong Library. *Healthy Living Plan (ROS02)* and *Absenteeism and Regular and Punctual Attendance (ROS05)* are the two other projects that support and enhance the objectives of this Child and Adult Literacy Project. The three projects are intertwined and it is anticipated that positive outcomes will be achieved by these projects being approached in collaboration.

The distribution of books, which is one of the strategies of this project, is scheduled to take place over three stages:

- Stage 1: M&CH Services, Bethany, New PIN, PASDV, EHVS and Corio Bay Senior College, Childcare Services
- Stage 2: Kindergartens, Playgroups, HIPPY / PEACH
- Stage 3: Primary Schools – Preps, Grades one and two during Book Week

Promotion of Child and Adult Literacy

Outcomes hierarchy	Progress to date	Success Criterion
March06 Shell Geelong Refinery donated \$3000.00 to Rosewall Primary School to purchase library books. Employees of Shell also donated money in 2005 to purchase books after a fire at the school.	<i>Continuing social investment by Shell, building on their contribution to the 'Let's Read' Project</i>	<i>Social investment partnership.</i>
March06 <i>Outreach Librarian commenced and Geelong Regional libraries working in partnership with this project.</i>	<i>Librarian attending Kindergartens, Playgroups and Primary School providing storytelling and literacy activities</i>	<i>Collaborative links with the Library</i>
March 2006 Outreach Librarian funded to attend Playgroups, Kindergartens and Primary School. Promotion of literacy and local library. 'Let's Read' delivered to 800 children	Ongoing 2 nd delivery in April 2006	Link between local library and universal services Collaboration between Shell, The Smith Family and Best Start
Improved reading levels of children and better access to literacy resources for families	Future Stage	Reading Levels statistics Anecdotal evidence
Promotion of early years literacy	Ongoing	
Supporting local access to library services	Ongoing	
Book Exchange containers in the 3 Rosewall Playgroups Network and Rosewall Breakfast Club at Rosewall Primary School	Ongoing	Book containers in key locations
Corio Librarian attending Child Development/Learning Working Group Meetings. Meetings occasionally being held at the library	Ongoing	Connecting local professionals to enhance access to services & the promotion of children's literacy in the community
Smith Family 'Let's Read' Project to be established in Corio- link in strategies to increase children and family membership at the local library	Ongoing	Committed partnership to enhance literacy in the community & a public launch to provide a strong community profile. Increase in library membership
Literacy Working Group formed and regular meetings held with Geelong Regional Library Corporation	Ongoing	Co-operative partnership with Geelong Regional Library Corporation
Distribution of books and promotion of the importance of literacy. Stage 2 and Stage 3 distribution	Completed	'Let's Read' project will build on these initiatives. Children appreciative & enthusiastic about their 'own' book. (Receipt of 'Thank you' drawings)
Strengthening community partnerships	Ongoing	Demonstration of working collaboratively
Mobilising community resources	Ongoing	
Distribution of books and promotion of the	Completed	Books distributed. Promotion

importance of literacy. Stage 1 distribution		carried out
Storytelling and Theatre performances	Completed	Performances conducted
Purchasing of books for Stage 2 of Literacy Kits distribution	Completed	Books purchased
Festival launch of Literacy Kits	Completed	Kits launched at festival
Book sale at Rosewall Neighbourhood House	Completed	Book sale held
Key stakeholders identified and engaged	Completed	Identification of key stakeholders
Child Development / Learning Working Group established	Completed	Working Group established
Level of community needs and available resources mapped	Completed	Identification of needs & available resources

Implementation

The Literacy Project was launched at the Corio Community Festival where 150 literacy kits were distributed to families who attended. A book sale linking into the 'Parents Time Out' group and the kindergarten morning session has been held at the Rosewall Neighbourhood House where parents were able to use vouchers given out at the Corio Community Festival to purchase books. Another book sale was planned to take place at Corio Primary School. Early discussions have been held with the Geelong Regional Libraries Cooperation to explore ways to enhance the libraries' connectedness to the Rosewall / Corio community. Strengthening the libraries capacity to get information into the community and building the accessibility to services will add to the sustainability of literacy growth in the community. A database is being established of Best Start sites. A partnership has been formed with Geelong Collins Booksellers for the supply of books at reasonable prices for the literacy kits. The ACFE is implementing innovative projects at Neighbourhood Houses to support family literacy and Best Start is aware of these projects. A parent information morning tea at Rosewall Preschool has been conducted which covered the literacy and dental projects. Nine parents attended. During Book Week (August 20-27, 2004) nine storytelling sessions were held at kindergartens and schools along with two theatre performances combining two early years classes from two schools (Rosewall Primary School and St. Francis Xavier). Books were distributed to every child in prep, Grade 1 & Grade 2 with extra books distributed to the school libraries. Best Start Literacy Working Group has been established and focuses on sustainable strategies through the development of links with the Geelong Regional Library Corporation and managing the 'Let's Read Project, which is a three year project, going beyond the life of Rosewall Best Start.

Overview of 'Let's Read' project

'Let's Read' is a comprehensive early literacy program that promotes the importance of reading with young children from birth to five years of age, and has been specifically designed to address the needs of disadvantaged communities. It is a national, evidence-based program that has been developed following a literature review, community consultations, focus groups and a feasibility study. A reference group was also formed to provide critical feedback. CCCH / TSF believe that it is important that all children are read to every day from a very early age. This activity needs to be seen as a vital part of a child's development. Reading with young children needs to be promoted to families and all members of the community as a fun and integral part of a child's daily routine. Strategies need to be implemented to enable this practice to become part of the culture of family life. Best Start Rosewall is working to establish this project in Corio. 'Let's Read' was launched in Corio in August. The 'Let's Read' Training was attended by 27 early childhood service providers in Corio. Media promotion included three radio stations plus the Geelong Advertiser and The Age newspapers. Rosewall Best Start is working closely with the AEDI (Australian Early Childhood Index Project), the City of Greater Geelong, to track the Prep children's literacy levels over the next 3- 5 years

March 06

A Corio Strategic Plan is being developed for the sustainability of Corio 'Let's Read'. Family Services, City of Greater Geelong is an active participant in the development of this plan.

March 06

The Child and Adult Literacy Project has Funded an Outreach Librarian for one day a week for one year. The expected outcomes are to

- ***Increase the number of parents reading to their children***

- ***Increase child and family membership at Corio Library***

Benefits to date

Parents are actually talking about literacy and Best Start. Best Start is becoming visible in the community e.g.. The distribution of book bags and August Book Month Activities etc. The 'Let's Read' Project (3 year funded project) for Corio has the potential of being able to form collaborative partnerships with the Smith Family, Shell, Geelong Regional Library Corporation and Rosewall Best Start. The appointment of a new Program Activities position at the Geelong Regional Library Corporation has enabled regular meetings with Rosewall Best Start and stronger collaboration with shared activities, particularly the 'Let's Read' Project with the Smith Family and Shell. The positive collaboration between The Smith Family, Best Start, the Geelong Regional Libraries Corporation and Shell in Corio has been a highlight of the project. Through the multi-faceted delivery approach of the 'Let's Read' packs, we will reach many families in a short period of time.

March 06

The Outreach Librarian is supporting the schools, Kindergartens and Playgroups with resources that were not accessible to them and will provide a vital link between universal services, parents and the local library. The Outreach Librarian activities will act as a 'trigger' to a myriad of other literacy activities and promotion for literacy and reading in the Corio community.

Barriers to date

For this project to be sustainable the ongoing link with the Geelong Regional Libraries will be important for literacy access for the community. While the Geelong Regional Libraries have been very supportive, a lack of staff to work on new initiatives is an issue. The appointment of a new Program Activities position at the Geelong Regional Library will need to be seen as an initiative that needs ongoing support.

3.2.2 Participation in kindergarten

MARCH 06

The Absenteeism project Worker is working with the Kindergarten teachers and has developed a Calendar (based on Yarra Ranges Best Start Koori Calendar but adapted to a local flavour) to help the kindergarten families with strategies to support regular kindergarten attendance. Also checklists for the children for morning activities to help get to school on time.

A Flyer has been developed to remind parents of the importance of regular attendance at kindergarten" Research evidence proves that regular attendance at Kindergarten gives you child improved self esteem and confidence to begin primary school.

The aims of these initiatives are to reduce the number of absences at kindergarten utilising some of the strategies identified in the Best Start Absenteeism Project.

Projects

There are no projects specifically targeting kindergarten participation, however strong links between the Rosewall Playgroup Facilitator and local kindergartens are being developed. Through these playgroups the transition to Kindergartens and 'value' of regular attendance for children will be encouraged. It should also be noted that the four Primary Schools and Kindergartens in the area communicate regularly and are developing a strong sense of shared responsibility. In addition, a Rosewall Best Start School Readiness Form was developed between the Rosewall Kindergarten teacher and the Rosewall Prep teacher. This is monitored at the end of each term and shared with parents, so any needs can be identified early. Parents will have an understanding of where their child needs to be to make the transition to school easier for the child. This supports the value of kindergarten as an important/essential prelude to school.

Data

Participation rates in four-year-old kindergarten in Greater Geelong were not significantly different from the comparison Victorian population in any year. This data supports the lack of focus on kindergarten participation. The Best Start team feel that while these statistics are probably an accurate reflection of overall rates for the LGA, attendance in Corio is much lower.

Table 5a: Participation in Four Year Old Kindergarten in Greater Geelong compared to the rest of Regional Victoria

Greater Geelong		
Year	%	RR95%CI
2001	98.6	1.03(1.02-1.03)
2002	96.4	0.99(0.98-1)
2003	99.5	1.01(1-1.01)

Updated Data (June, 2005)

Rates of kindergarten enrolment were generally significantly lower than the state comparator in Greater Geelong in all years.

Table 5b: Enrolment in four-year-old kindergarten in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

2002		2003		2004	
%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)	%	RR(95%CI)
93	0.97 (0.96-0.98)	91.44	0.96 (0.95-0.97)	89.34	0.97 (0.96-0.98)

* All data in this table have been updated using the most recent (2001) census data, producing results different to those published in previous Best Start site reports

3.2.3 Absences from primary school

Projects

There is one project that specifically focuses on absenteeism. The target group for Rose wall's *Absenteeism and Regular and Punctual Attendance project* (ROS05) comprises kindergarten children, preps, as well as Grades one and two students. Various inclusive strategies have been planned to support parents in understanding the importance of school attendance. To support the families of children who are chronically late and regularly absent, the working group has addressed the reasons and barriers related to these circumstances. A strong collaborative approach is important as the reasons for late attendance and absenteeism are often complex and vary from family to family. To bring about change requires a multi-faceted approach that has clear parameters but also a response that allows flexibility through a multi-service approach.

ROS05 - Absenteeism and regular and punctual attendance

Outcomes hierarchy	Progress to date	Success Criterion
<i>March 06 The Project Worker has liased with the Best Start sites in Ballarat and Hume to share the strategies and learning's.</i>	<i>Sharing a valuable and effective tool with other communities</i>	<i>The wider network utilising an established tool rather than duplication and wasted resources.</i>
<i>MARCH 06 The Absenteeism project Worker is working with the Kindergarten teachers and has developed a Calendar (based on Yarra Ranges Best Start Koori Calendar but adapted to a local flavour)to help the kindergarten families with strategies to support regular kindergarten attendance. Also checklists for the children for morning activities to help get to school on time</i>	<i>Draft Calendar completed and stored on memory stick for easy, low cost reproduction</i>	<i>Implemented in June 2006. Inclusive of reading, library, dental health, nutrition and physical activity information which promotes all the Best Start activities</i>
<i>MARCH06 Absenteeism Project have obtained funding from the School Focused Youth Service to adapt the 'School Be In it Kit' for use with Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative</i>	<i>Strong links being developed with Wathaurong Aboriginal</i>	<i>Cohesive and consistent approach locally to address chronic absenteeism</i>

	<i>Cooperative</i>	
MARCH06 <i>Absenteeism Project</i> <i>Attendance Policy developed at a local level and implemented at the schools</i> <i>'Your Kids, Their Future. Developed a teacher support process for teacher monitoring and following up of students with poor attendance</i>	<i>Response from teachers that the process is efficient and tracks absences quickly</i>	<i>A locally developed tool that approaches from all levels for accountability- parents, children and teachers</i>
Family Kit developed for Absenteeism 'School Be In It' for parents having trouble getting their children to school	Ongoing	A sustainable kit that can be reproduced at low cost & quickly as needs require. Collaborative effort by Best Start networks
Both Project Workers attend the Working Group meetings and present a report at the end of each term	Ongoing	Enhancing & strengthening existing networks
Best Start Partnership to fund the Children of Parents With A Mental Illness Project for 2005	Completed	Funding of project 'Children of Parents with a Mental Illness' for 2005
Best Start Partnership to fund the Absenteeism and Late Attendance Project for 2005	Completed	Funding of project 'Absenteeism & Late Attendance' for 2005
Enhancement of collaborative forum of support through service providers – universal and secondary services	Completed	
Mobilisation of community resources to support local project activity	Completed	
Local needs and key service providers identified	Completed	Identification of key services & local needs
Breaking Cycles – Building Futures Forum	Completed	Forum attended
Child Development / Learning Working Group established	Completed	Working Group established

Implementation

Best Start Rosewall has made contact with the Geelong North Network Student Support Services and the Geelong and Bellarine Network to try to determine some of the reasons for absenteeism and then consider constructive approaches. There are currently two local approaches in place addressing absenteeism and late arrivals. These approaches are:

- The Rosewall Breakfast Club that began with offering breakfast two mornings a week and has now expanded to operating five mornings a week
- The Walking School Bus that operates at two schools in the Best Start site

At a working group meeting that focused on exploratory clarification of service mapping and networking with service provider's two proposals were developed. These two proposals, a funding request for a worker to be co-located in a local Best Start school to support the initiative 'Children of Parents with a Mental Illness' and a funding request for a worker to work one day a week across the three State government schools within the Best Start site to address absenteeism and attendance issues, were presented to the Rosewall Best Start Partnership. A forum presented by the Brotherhood of St. Laurence 'Breaking Cycles – Building Futures' has been conducted with 20 service providers attending. This forum held at the Corio Community Health Centre presented research to support strategies.

PROJECT 1.

Absenteeism and Late Attendance Project; Partnership with Geelong Northern Network, Department of Education and Training

The Absenteeism and Late Attendance Project was approved by the Best Start Partnership in December 2004, to be funded for one day a week for the year of 2005. This project is closely aligned with the

Reading Abilities Indicator, as unless the children can attend school the strategies for the Child and Adult Literacy Project are not reaching the families who need the support. Through the Brotherhood of St. Lawrence research and issues identified through the schools, these two projects were instrumental to deal with the barriers for some children

Parent Liaison (Attendance Program)

In 2005 the Program Officer is working on several levels:

1. Working directly with students and their families to increase their attendance at school. This may include home visits, school visits, and referrals to other agencies, putting in place workable strategies for families and arranging meetings with families and schools. In chronic cases it includes organising case conferences involving other agencies such as, Department of Education and Training, DHS (Child Protection), Bethany, Glastonbury etc. to search for the best way to assist the family;
2. Speaking with school staff and providing information and strategies to the staff of GNN and Best Start schools that are experiencing high levels of non-attendance. Consistently promoting the idea of using strategies from the "IT'S NOT OKAY TO BE AWAY" kit and focusing on making teachers aware of their responsibility to monitor attendance and provide engaging and stimulating classroom programs;
3. Discussing with principals and staff the necessity of having in place a simple Attendance Policy, which has clear processes and procedures? It is imperative that the policy and its expectations are clearly and persistently spelt out to staff, parents and students. It is an expectation that by the end of 2005 all GNN and Best Start primary schools will have a clearly articulated Attendance Policy;
4. Attending and speaking at forums, meetings etc. within the wider community where the issues of attendance are discussed and meeting with personnel from other agencies to discuss attendance issues, possible future programs and support for schools and families;
5. Attending the welfare meetings of some GNN and Best Start schools to gain an overall picture of what family support is needed so that within the school welfare group decisions can be made regarding the best person to take on the case;
6. Liaising with other staff within the GNN school support service;
7. Working closely with the GNN Welfare Executive and Committee and Best Start Child Development and Learning Working Group to explore future directions and programs;
8. Continuing to collect and analyse data.
9. *'School Be In It' Kits well received in the schools and parents.*
10. *Project with Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative to implement 'School Be In It' Kits through School Youth Focused Funding*
11. *Establishment of Kindergarten Absenteeism Project. Production of Attendance Calendar for all Best Start Kindergarten parents. Sustainability is ensured with Calendar being able to be reproduced at a low cost for kindergartens as template on memory stick.*
12. *Geelong Kindergarten Association supported of the Absenteeism Project and discussion will be held with them to review that Calendar to see if it is appropriate for all the GKA Kindergartens.*

PROJECT 2.

COPWAMI- Children of Parents with a Mental Illness Project (this situation was identified as one of the barriers why children were not attending school)

Rationale for service development: Numerous reports in this area suggest that children of the mentally ill have:

- a higher prevalence of developmental delay
- 20-50% will experience psychological disorder during childhood, and adolescent or adulthood – compared to 10-20% of the general population

- 10-14% will be diagnoses with a psychotic illness at some point in their lives compared to 1-2% of the general population
- 19% of substantiated cases of child hood neglect and abuse were associated with parents who had a psychiatric disability (An integrated strategy for Child Protection and Placement Services 2002)
- Experience isolation

Goals of the project include:

1. to increase identification of children whose parents have a mental illness
2. to develop and facilitate group programs that are suitable for the age group
3. to further support and enhance teachers and support staff in identifying and working with the target group

This initiative has seen a partnership established with Glastonbury Child and Family Services, Barwon Health and Best Start. Best Start funding for a 12 month period with a commitment from Barwon Health to source funding for future sustainability. The funding request was for \$12,800 for one day a week service to children in the Northern District (for a one year period) with the target group consisting of primary school children covered by the Best Start program. This will ensure that families that are impacted by parent(s) with a mental illness are identified and resources continue to be developed for children, agencies, schools & mental health staff. This enables direct contact and assessment by the worker to direct appropriate resources to minimise / reduce the impact on the child. Group programs can be developed and facilitated specifically to the age group and need of the child/ren, and community awareness can be enhanced with a co-ordinated approach to the needs of the target group. It was felt that the desired location would be a co-location in a local school area. Rosewall Primary School, Corio Primary School, Corio West Primary School, St Francis Xavier Primary School, were all considered and explored for viability. Further access points for service could be at any of the 3 Kindergartens or via the Rosewall Neighbourhood House. This project links to the Healthy Living Plan and children's wellbeing initiatives.

In the initial 12 months of the COPWAMI program, links were well established with the Northern District education and support services, which clearly identified a need for enhanced service to children in this specific catchment area.

Background Information

The COPWAMI project was established as a joint Barwon Health/Glastonbury initiative which employed a mental Health Nurse (Dawn Foster) who was jointly managed but clinically supervised by Barwon Health, and located at Glastonbury to capitalise on using the established non stigmatising community based referral pathways and assertive outreach approach of the existing Family support program to "fast track" co-working interventions and/or secondary consultation for children or family referrals where parental mental illness was an issue.

Glastonbury FBS statistics (03-04) indicated the program worked with approximately 650 families and 950 children in the Geelong and Colac region 52% of these were in the (0-8 yrs) age cohort. 34% of program referrals came from the 3214 Postcode (Corio, Norlane, North Shore.) with approximately 20 % of referrals noting parental mental illness at intake. Significant numbers of families referred for medium-long term generalist 'in-home' family support involved complex "multiple needs". Working with families routinely included school attendance, substance abuse, family violence, and assistance with child development, behaviour management, and parenting and safety issues.

Although the initial 12-month program was to identify need and have them addressed in a way that enhances the individual child and overall family functioning, outcomes of this program proved that this program couldn't be self-sustained without the clinical expertise of the COPWAMI clinician. Agencies identified that they did not have the skill, time, resources and clinical expertise to sustain or continue development of the service.

Ultimately it is the goal of Barwon health Mental Health and Glastonbury family services to be successful in future ongoing funding support. But until such time that this does occur, the program needs to further provide evidence of need, and outcome that proves the beneficial components for the child, family and service providers.

Benefits to date

Being able to link in with more prominent services that can bring about structural change.

The Absenteeism and Late Attendance Project Worker has:

- Spoken to the staff, providing information and strategies, at Corio South Primary School, Corio Primary School, St Francis Xavier Primary School, Norlane West Primary School, Ashby Primary School, North Shore Primary School, and Corio West Primary School. Future meetings are scheduled at Rosewall Primary School and Hamlyn Banks Primary School;
- Had discussions with the Principals / Assistant Principals / Primary Welfare Officers at Best Start and GNN primary schools;
- Attended meetings with Best Start, Batforce, St Augustines, Bethany, Wathaurong, Department of Human Services and DE&T;
- Continued to manage the cases of 16 families throughout GNN and Best Start primary schools (6 of these under the Best Start Program);
- Begun collecting attendance data on the students involved;
- Ensured that all Best Start schools have the kit "IT'S NOT OKAY TO BE AWAY";
- Followed up families from 2004;
- Organised a Case Conference involving DE&T, Bethany, DHS and Glastonbury.

Benefits of COPWAMI

- The developed network of contact for schools and kindergartens where children of parents with a mental illness attend.

Barriers to date

Engaging vulnerable families is an ongoing difficulty as it is an intensive and expensive process. There is a need to already have in place existing connections with these families (e.g. through kindergartens or schools) so that these relationships can be linked into.

Project 1. Links established between these two projects and the Playgroups, Kindergartens and Primary Schools. The challenge is to maintain these links when there is no pivotal connecting point.

Project 2. COPWAMI (Children of Parents with a Mental Illness)

Although the initial 12-month program was to identify needs and have them addressed in a way that enhances the individual child and overall family functioning, outcomes of this program proved that this program couldn't be self-sustained without the clinical expertise of the COPWAMI clinician. Agencies identified that they did not have the skill, time, resources and clinical expertise to sustain or continue development of the service.

Data

Rates of absenteeism appeared to be increasing in Greater Geelong over the years shown. Again, the Statewide Evaluation team felt that rates for the LGA underestimated rates in Corio.

Table 6a: Average Days Absent of Students at Government Primary Schools by Year

Greater Geelong	Average days absent				
	Year				
Grade	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Prep	11.2	11.9	12.9	13.7	13.0
Year 1	11.3	11.6	12.4	12.4	12.6
Year 2	10.1	11.3	12.2	11.9	11.9

There were no differences in rate of absenteeism for children in Greater Geelong compared to the benchmark region in any grade.

Table 6b: Differences in Days Absence per Child for Greater Geelong compared to the Region

Grade	Days absent per child in 2003
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	Geelong	Region	M
Prep	12.97	13.18	-0.27
Year 1	12.63	12.51	0.16
Year 2	11.93	11.75	0.26

Updated Data (June, 2005)

Absence from school was analysed differently from other Best Start Indicators. The differences in rates of days absent per student were calculated for the Best Start sites compared to the sites' reference regional populations. When the test statistic (μ) is greater than 1.96, then the differences are considered significant.

There were no significant differences in rates of absenteeism in Geelong compared to the regional benchmark area.

Table 6c: Absenteeism in Greater Geelong compared to Regional benchmark areas by Year

Grade	2002		2003		2004	
	Av absent days	μ	Av absent days	μ	Av absent days	μ
Prep	13.697	0.145	12.969	-0.167	12.441	-0.514
Year 1	12.357	-0.214	12.634	0.096	12.241	-0.271
Year 2	11.906	-0.005	11.930	0.152	12.015	-0.264

* All data in this table have been updated using the most recent (2001) census data, producing results different to those published in previous Best Start site reports

3.2.4 Reading abilities

Projects

There were no projects directly addressing literacy levels in Rosewall although there were projects that attempted to influence literacy through increasing parent's reading to children. With research consistently demonstrating that parents reading to children in the early years (0-5) supports improved literacy abilities in the early years of schooling, Best Start Rosewall is supporting the implementation of the 'Let's Read' Project in the Corio area. (Refer to Child and Adult Literacy Project for further details).

Data

The percentage of children achieving benchmark reading levels in 2003 was not significantly different in Greater Geelong than in the comparison Victorian population in any grade although it is believed to be lower in Corio. This data suggests that reading abilities may not be a problem in Rosewall, however local data is needed to confirm this.

Table 7a: Reading Assessment Levels of Students in Government schools in Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria in 2003

Greater Geelong	2003 test results	%	RR95%CI
Prep	% Lvl 5 >=90%	83.808	0.99(0.97-1.02)
Year 1	% Lvl 15 >=90%	90.655	1.01(0.99-1.03)
Year2	% Lvl20 >=90%	95.900	1(0.99-1.01)

Updated Data (June, 2005)

Rates of prep children scoring over 90 per cent in their reading assessment were generally no different in Geelong than the regional benchmark areas in all years.

Rates of year one children scoring over 90 per cent in their reading assessment were generally no different in Geelong than the regional benchmark areas. There were no significant differences in rates of year one children scoring over 90 per cent in their reading assessment in 2002 compared to 2004.

Rates of year two children scoring over 90 per cent in their reading assessment were generally no different in Geelong than the regional benchmark areas.

Table 7b: Reading Assessment in Greater Geelong compared to Regional benchmark areas by Year

Grade	2002		2003		2004	
	%Lvl 5 >=90%	RR(95%CI)	%Lvl 5 >=90%	RR(95%CI)	%Lvl 5 >=90%	RR(95%CI)
Prep	83.42	1 (0.97-1.03)	83.81	0.98 (0.95-1.01)	82.46	0.96 (0.93-0.99)
Year 1	89.93	1 (0.98-1.02)	90.66	1.01 (0.99-1.03)	91.07	1.01 (0.99-1.03)
Year 2	95.99	1.01 (1-1.02)	95.90	1 (0.99-1.01)	95.96	1.01 (1-1.02)

* All data in this table have been updated using the most recent (2001) census data, producing results different to those published in previous Best Start site reports

3.3 Housing & Child Protection Indicators

3.3.1 Mobility/changes of housing for Office of Housing clients

Projects

There were no projects specifically addressing housing in Rosewall.

Data

Rates of public housing retention were significantly higher in Greater Geelong than in the comparison Victorian population in all years except for 2000-01 where there was no significant difference.

Table 8: Public housing retention after 12 months for households with children aged 8 years or under in Greater Geelong compared to regional Victoria

Greater Geelong		
Year	%	RR 95%CI
1999-2000	76.3	1.13(1.05-1.22)
2000-2001	77.3	1.1(1.02-1.19)
2001-2002	77.5	1.07(0.99-1.15)
2002-2003	85.5	1.14(1.07-1.22)

3.3.2 Re-notifications to child protection

Projects

Rosewall has no projects specifically dealing with child protection. Rates of childhood re-notification were not significantly different in Greater Geelong than in the comparison Victorian population in any year.

Updated Data (June, 2005)

Rates of renotification in Geelong were no different from the comparator in all years except 2003-2004, when rates were lower than the comparator.

Table 9: Rates of child protection client re-notification within 12 months for Greater Geelong compared to Regional Victoria by Year

Greater Geelong		
Year	%	RR 95% CI
1997-98	33.1	0.97(0.86-1.09)
1998-99	30.1	0.91(0.81-1.03)
1999-2000	34.5	0.92(0.83-1.02)
2000-01	33.3	0.94(0.85-1.04)
2001-02	36.5	0.95(0.86-1.05)
2002-03	34.4	0.89(0.86-1.05)
2003-04	34.08	0.87(0.78-0.98)

4 Subsidiary aims

4.1 Better access to child and family support, health service and early education

Projects

Rosewall's Accessible and Affordable Childcare/Playgroups Project was strongly identified as a need in both the Stronger Families and Best Start community consultation groups. These consultations all identified the lack of formal childcare, particularly in the Rosewall estate of Corio. There had previously been a long day care centre in Rosewall estate but that had now closed. The cost of childcare, family's complex needs and the need for a more flexible service were some of the reasons why this service could not be made sustainable. Cloverdale Community Centre had three active playgroups but the playgroups at the M&CH Hendy St Centre and Rosewall Neighbourhood House were struggling to continue.

This project links directly to Project ROS02 Healthy Living Plan, which is an umbrella project encompassing many positive parenting skills. The stakeholders involved in this project are Rosewall Neighbourhood House, the Family Services Officer, City of Greater Geelong, Hendy St. M&CH Centre, Corio West Primary School, HIPPY and PLAY.- Child and Family enrichment programs (Glastonbury), Outreach Nurses M&CH (PASDV and EHVS) and the Parenting Unit, City of Greater Geelong.

ROS06 - Accessible and affordable childcare / playgroups

Outcomes hierarchy	Progress to date	Success Criterion
<i>March 06 Establishment of the SPARK Working Group</i>	<i>Decision to investigate the viability of Occasional Care one afternoon per week to compliment the Kinder session</i>	<i>Working Group established.</i>
<i>March 06 Growth of Rosewall Playgroup and the peripheral benefits of social inclusion for families in the facilitated playgroup</i>	<i>Each term has shown an increase in attendance at Rosewall Playgroup</i>	<i>Parents who previously felt alienated at other playgroups have remained here to the presence of the Facilitator who provides a neutral ground for all parents and a stimulating environment for children.</i>
Better access to affordable childcare	Future Stage	Anecdotal evidence
City of Greater Geelong supports Playgroup Facilitator to apply for funding grant - sustainability to be supported by future funding	Ongoing	Willingness of organisations to work together to support shared outcomes for their services
A collaborative presentation by Bethany Family Support Innovation Project, Best Start project & the High Risk Infants Project at the Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference. The symposium explored stronger pathways between the universal & secondary service systems	Completed	Shared experiences & knowledge during the planning of the presentation
Bethany NEWPIN families coming to visit Rosewall (connection and idea suggested by the families after they came out to the Play Day)	Ongoing	Parents making active choices to participate in broader community activities
Playgroup Facilitator linking in with the Healthy	Ongoing	Enhancing & linking with

Living Project, Dental Health Project, Child and Adult Literacy Project.		other services/projects rather than duplicate
Play Day at Rosewall Neighbourhood House to promote universal services in Corio and to highlight the new Rosewall Playgroup Network	Completed	Good interaction between all universal service providers & interested parents
Playgroup attendance numbers increasing at all three sites	Ongoing	Increased parent participation
Rosewall Playgroup Reference Group established	Completed	Shared commitment by Neighbourhood House, City of Greater Geelong & Best Start
Playgroup Facilitator appointed by Best Start Partnership as a way to sustain playgroups in the local area	Completed	Facilitator appointed
Play Day and Service Provision Forum	Completed	Forum held
Restructuring of existing playgroup services	Completed	Service restructure
Commitment to funding playgroup facilitator	Completed	Creation & support of Playgroup Facilitator position
Playgroup Victoria Forum conducted	Completed	Forum held
Establishment of local network group	Completed	Network group established
Local needs identified and resources mapped	Completed	Identification of needs & existing resources

Implementation

Options were explored to evaluate whether a long day care centre would currently be sustainable. Families indicated that at this point in their lives they need some respite time rather than childcare for employment reasons. Playgroups were limited in the area as parents were reluctant to take on the administrative responsibility, particularly when they were already dealing with many complex day-to-day situations. Playgroups were recognised as valuable particularly with the options of having a parenting education component but needed a different model to ensure sustainability.

After discussions with Playgroup Victoria it was decided to hold a playgroup forum and invite parents and interested service providers to ascertain the potential for a paid playgroup facilitator working across three or four Best Start Playgroup sites. If this model was successful it could be duplicated across other playgroups in Corio.

Parents have also expressed a need for support to develop better parenting skills. Through the Roster Playgroups it is hoped that a variety of parenting programs will be offered. Links will be strengthened with existing parenting programs in Geelong. A Play Day and Service Provision Forum were planned as an opportunity where parents can be provided with information from a number of relevant services and agencies.

Immediately after the playgroup forum meeting, a local network group was formed to support playgroups in the Rosewall/Cloverdale area. Within two weeks Corio West Primary School had commenced a playgroup at the school. There was strong support from the two service providers but the parents needed some structured support. The Best Start community facilitator and the Family Services Officer, City of Greater Geelong continued to work with this network to establish a 'Roster Playgroup'. The definition from Playgroup Victoria is 'a roster playgroup means a playgroup that rosters parents and carers to supervise and provide a play program for the children while some parents are absent. A roster playgroup is non-commercial in nature but may employ a person to assist with a particular function of the playgroup.'

The Best Start partnership has agreed to fund a paid playgroup facilitator position at eight hours per week for 12 month period with skill training provided to access community grants for a sustainable future. The target group will be families with children in the 0-4 year age group, focusing on the 2-4 year age group, as there is a lack of service provision for this age in the area. The playgroup facilitator will work across three sites with two hours at each, a two-hour administration provision and be employed by the Rosewall Neighbourhood House. At this stage funding is a difficulty therefore Rosewall Best Start is working closely with Playgroup Victoria to look at innovative ways that can address the need in the area. A funding application has been lodged with the City of Greater Geelong.

The sustainability of the Facilitator role is dependent on funding and part of the facilitator's role was to seek ongoing funding. The management of the MCH Hendy St Playgroup has been transferred to the auspice of the Rosewall Neighbourhood House. This had been a cause for concern for the parents at this Playgroup and it was in danger of folding.

A Play/Service Provider Forum was held in February 2005 and included the Play Days and Service Providers Forum at the Rosewall Neighbourhood House. This Play Day was seen as a way to promote Universal Services in Corio and was enthusiastically attended by Family Day Care, Children Services Resource Developmental Unit, Regional Parenting Resources, Maternal Child Health, Long Day Care Centres, Bethany, Glastonbury and Barwon Health Dental Services.

Discussions are also underway with Glastonbury and Rosewall Neighbourhood House about establishing the HIPPY and PEACH programs there for the local families. The results of these programs in Norlane have been very successful. The Playgroup Reference group now comprises of the Family Services Community Development Officer, City of Greater Geelong, the Coordinator of Rosewall Neighbourhood and the Best Start Facilitator.

MARCH06

Parent Morning Teas

This is an initiative Parenting Working Group and the Community Living Working Group

To provide opportunities for parents to receive universal services information, link with services and meet informally with other parents. The Rosewall Café, Rosewall Neighbourhood House, is providing the venue and a 'menu' of services and talks is being developed with Regional Parenting Unit, Bethany Community Support and Glastonbury Child and Family Services to provide the parent education sessions. Kindergarten parents will be targeted and a few free coffee mornings will act as an incentive to attract families after the Kindergarten 'drop off.'

The first session will include the 'Let's Read' DVD and the Outreach Librarian and the Playgroup Facilitator will provide storytelling session demonstration with a fun, interactive design

Benefits to date

The M&CH playgroup in the area is no longer in danger of closing because no parent was prepared to take responsibility for administration. The playgroup is now under the auspice of the Rosewall Neighbourhood House that has addressed the issue. The Rosewall Playgroup Network has increased participation by 100%. The Playgroup Facilitator provides a platform of contact to associated universal services and has a strong association with the Rosewall Neighbourhood House. Discussions are under way for future links to the Municipal Early Years Plan.

MARCH06

The numbers at Rosewall Playgroup continue to increase, with discussion of commencing a 2nd session.

MARCH06

SPARK(Supporting Parents at Rosewall Kindergarten) Working Group has been formed to address the sustainability of this kindergarten as numbers are historically low. Working Group comprises representation from DHS, City of Greater Geelong, Rosewall Primary School and Kindergarten, Rosewall Neighbourhood House and Rosewall Playgroup.

The plan is to establish Occasional Care one afternoon a week to compliment the morning kindergarten session. This would give parents a whole day to access study, work or some respite/personal time. The Kindergarten, with Occasional Care, would provide a more flexible service that could possibly attract a wider range of families from Corio and Lara to the Rosewall Kindergarten. This would also develop strong links with the Playgroup and particularly the Neighbourhood House where parents could access Adult Learning classes with the extra child care provided.

Barriers to date

At present, achieving funding for this project is a barrier; therefore Rosewall Best Start is looking for innovative ways to meet the need. There have been difficulties in getting organisations to take over auspice arrangements if parents don't have the confidence and competence to do so. A more consolidated approach is warranted to take the pressure of administering the program off parents. Access to services is still limited to some families due to restricted public transport in the area. The need for access to a Community Bus is continually recommended to strengthen the family's connection to services and the broader community.

4.2 Parents' capacity, confidence and enjoyment of family life

Projects

There are no projects that are specifically focused on this subsidiary aim, however Best Start Rosewall have developed links and works collaboratively with other initiatives that focus on this aspect. Examples of this include the fact that the Rosewall Playgroup Facilitator is also trained in the Triple P Parenting training (Regional Parenting Resource Unit) and is running a program with the Rosewall Neighbourhood House 'Parents Time Out' group; Glastonbury and Bethany continuing to provide strong Parenting Programs in Corio and networking with the Best Start connections; and participation in the Corio Community Festival (2004) and the Going Potty Festival (2005) which encouraged family participation and a celebration of the enjoyment of family life

4.3 Communities that are more child and family friendly

Projects

The Rosewall Best Start partnership do not have any projects focusing on the subsidiary aim of promoting communities that are more child friendly, however there have been a number of activities that promote communities that are more child and family friendly. These activities, which are supported by Best Start, include:

- Northerly Aspects Community Newsletter-local news/activities for local people that promotes family activities
- C.L.A.N- Community Liaison Action Network for Norlane and Corio Community Groups- an active 'voice' in the community with links to the City of Greater Geelong. Supports and promotes community and family activities
- Connections Park- a community park to be shared and cared for by the community through the Neighbourhood House, the Primary School, the Kindergarten and the Playgroups. A place to feel safe and enjoy for all community members and families.
- 'Going Potty' Community Festival- Arts and Environmental focus- a celebration of the community and recognition of the people in the community. The participation in the festival has given a stronger sense of 'our' community and with that is attached a stronger feeling of safety and connection to the community
- Established links with the Corio Shopping Centre- the main hub of the Corio area. The Shopping Centre has donated over 1000 packets of texta's, which will be used in the Primary Schools for a Community Safety Art Competition. Discussions with the Corio Shopping Centre Management will always have a child and family friendly focus
- The local Geelong radio station broadcast from the Rosewall Primary School one morning and highlighted the Breakfast Club and the Life Be in It Learning Centre that is now based there.

4.4 Service cooperation and collaboration

Projects

Under this indicator, Rosewall's maternity and M&CH project is aimed at strengthening professional relationships and supporting improved coordination and communication between maternity and M&CH Centres. By strengthening this link it is hoped that new mothers and infants will receive continuity of care. As has already been noted, this project has two aspects to it: the first component focuses on the promotion of the Ages and Stages assessments at M&CH Centres (which is listed under item 4.1.4.7 of this report) and the component that focuses on supporting facilitation of change for a smooth transition from one service to another.

In the community consultations, the contact with M&CH Centres was identified as a pivotal point in a family's life. Particularly for first time parents, this is the start of the journey of parenting. The transition from the maternity hospital to an M&CH Centre needs to be a smooth facilitation to support

the families in establishing connectedness to the first universal service as a parent. Coupled with this is the accessing of available antenatal classes and information about breastfeeding.

The parenting working group of the Rosewall Best Start partnership is responsible for this project. The coordinator of community child health (M&CH) is also a member of this parenting working group. The target group of services providers are the maternity nurses and the M&CH nurses. The target group in the community are families with newborn babies.

The project will include activities and strategies that will strengthen professional relationships by ensuring that roles and responsibilities of each service are clear. The project will support improved coordination and communication between the two services thereby enhancing new mothers' and infants' continuity of care. For vulnerable families presenting with a number of clinical and social risk factors, the quality of care, of health and wellbeing is strongly linked to collaboration and partnerships between service sectors.

ROS01 - Maternity and M&CH project

Outcomes hierarchy	Progress to date	Success Criterion
Greater collaboration between the agencies	Ongoing	Anecdotal evidence
Maternity and Maternal Child Health Survey. Exploring the experiences of parents in Maternity Hospital and the transition to Maternal Child Health Centres. Target groups: Bethany Community Support, Corio Bay Senior College and Rosewall Playgroups.	Ongoing	Survey distributed & completed in targeted areas
Professional Work Exchange between Barwon Health Maternity Hospital Midwifery and M&CH Nurse. Service Coordination. Protocol 'Continuity of Care'	Completed	Exchanges taken place. Protocol developed
Collaboration between the agencies (Maternity & M&CH)	Ongoing	Improved communication between services. Available platform for agencies to work together
Broaden parent working group members to strengthen the adapting of local guidelines into a protocol	Completed	Specific skills to specific projects as need arises
Develop strategies to support strengthening professional relationships between Maternity and M&CH	Ongoing	Strategies developed
Establish current level of antenatal care offered and usage	Completed	Existing levels established
Identify parents needs in accessing classes and health services especially the transition from Maternity to M&CH	Completed	Parental needs identified

Implementation

At present there is a protocol being developed between maternity services and Municipal Association of Victoria as providers of M&CH services for promoting collaboration and partnership in working with new mothers and their infants. The parenting working group will review this protocol and use this as a local guide to enhance the existing cooperation between the two services and to identify and establish ways to promote ongoing cooperation and collaboration toward resolution of local issues. A member of the Victorian committee responsible for drafting the protocol for change, who works at Barwon Health, has been invited to join the parenting working group. This will provide a link between the State and the local Best Start level.

A professional work exchange between Maternity and M&CH staff was organised where the M&CH nurse attended a day at the Maternity Hospital and a midwife attended the M&CH Centre. Best Start funds were used to support the relief staff required for this exchange to be possible. This was seen as a way to support professional development by increasing awareness of the roles and responsibilities of

each profession. Creating better understanding and stronger linkages will enhance the existing services towards a seamless service to support the transition of parents from hospital to the M&CH centres.

A Maternity & Maternal Child Health Parent Survey has been developed and is being implemented with the objective to review the opportunity for improved service capacity for parents, particularly in the transition from Maternity to Maternal Child Health. The focus is on the care and information parents receive antenatal, in hospital and at home. The parents who have participated in the survey so far are from Corio Bay Senior College, the Rosewall Playgroups Network and NEWPIN, Bethany Community Support. NEWPIN is part of the Supporting Vulnerable Families Innovations Project, Geelong Innovations Project. Survey has been completed and collated. The Parenting Working group will follow up on recommendations resulting from the survey.

Benefits to date

There is a good level of cooperation developing. There is willingness for large organisations to be open and sharing developing trust in relation to draft protocols. One M&CH nurse has participated in professional exchange with the maternity hospital at this stage. The feedback from this professional work exchange was that it was a 'valuable exercise' – good professional development.

Barriers to date

Need for funds and resources to be available to support the professional work exchange between Maternity and M&CH staff for this initiative to continue.

March06

1. Describe the change and growth of the Partnership over the last 3 years.

Rosewall Best Start Partnership has sustained the same core membership over the past three years with an average of 15-18 attending each meeting.

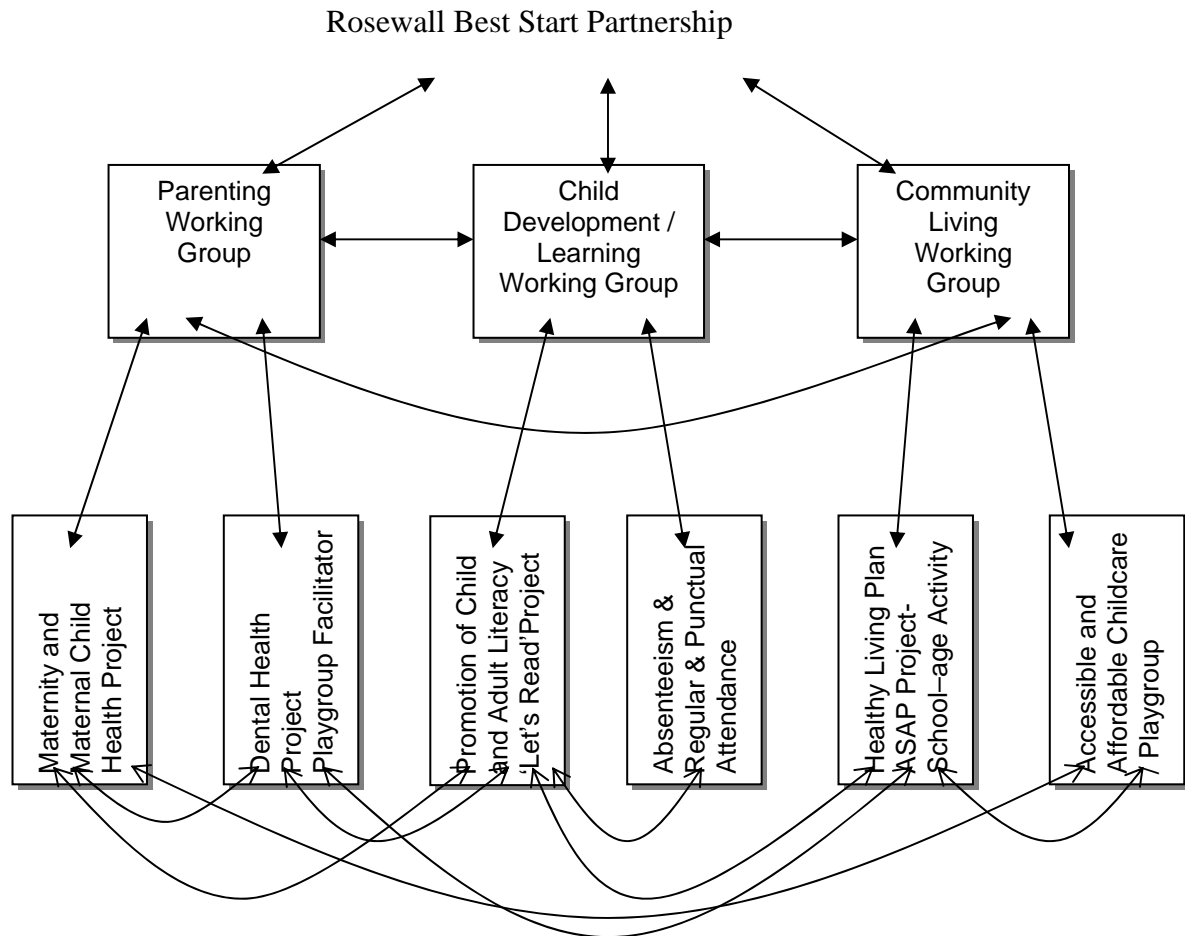
- ***City of Greater Geelong- Family Services Manager, MCH Manager, Regional Parenting Service Manager***
- ***Department of Education and Training-2 School Principals, 1 Early Years Teacher, the Student Well-being Barwon Regional Manager, 3 School Welfare Workers and the Northern Network Absenteeism Worker.***
- ***DHS-1 Best Start Project Worker, 1 School Nurse and Senior Managers every 3-4 meetings as required, 3 Neighbourhood Renewal Workers, 1 Kindergarten Teacher***
- ***Barwon Health – 1 Early Years Speech Therapist***
- ***Parent Representatives***
- ***Bethany Community Support- Integrated Family Support Service Manger***
- ***Glastonbury Child and Family Services-Family Development Unit Program Manager***
- ***Rosewall Neighbourhood House-Centre Coordinator and Playgroup Facilitator***

The 3 Working Groups contain a few of the above plus MCH Nurse, CREATE(Geelong)INC Project Worker, Bethany NewPIN Coordinator, Corio Bay College Parents Access Worker and Family Centre Outreach Worker, Glastonbury Senior Outreach Worker, GP Association representative , Barwon Health dietitian/Romp and Chomp Facilitator , Parent representatives.

If there is a specific project that requires representation then professional will attend for the planning of that project. Eg. QUIT Project- QUIT Victoria, Barwon Health Maternity

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2. Partnership Structure



The cross-over arrows demonstrate the interwoven nature of the Projects. The 'Attendance Project is fundamental to ensure that the children are at school to benefit from the Literacy projects. The Dental Health Project, Smiles 4 Miles, links with the 'Romp and Chomp' Project as they endorse the same health promotion messages

Subsidiary Projects

- QUIT Project
- Maternity-MCH Transition Survey
- Resources support to MCH Innovation Project
- Best Start 'gift' packs –book, dental kit, parent information-over 2000 given out at services, festivals and parent forums
- Play Day Activities-promotion of Children's Services with information and activities
- Book sales at Neighbourhood House and Primary School-Griffiths Books
- 3 Community Festivals
- Outreach Librarian
- Annual August Book Month Activities with storytellers and performing arts
- Joint Presentation at two Conferences, AIFS and NIFETY

3. Sustainability of the Partnership

There is agreement that the Rosewall Best Start Partnership will continue. The consensus of the Partnership is that the Partnership supports strong links between the Universal services. The concern is that the funding will support a Facilitator two days a week but it will be difficult to source funding for future evolving initiatives to respond to the community needs. The detail of how this will operate is being discussed at the Working Groups and the Partnership.

4. In-kind support of Best Start that partner agencies have provided

- Partnership Meeting Hours – base time of 15 hours per year for every person attending (7 meetings per year)**
- Working Groups – base time of 12 hours per year for every person attending (6 meetings per year)**
- Peripheral times-telephone calls, impromptu meetings, forums, sub-group meetings, community festivals. A core group of the MCH Nurse, the Kindergarten teachers, the Playgroup Facilitator, the School Principals and teachers, the Neighbourhood House Coordinator, the Neighbourhood Renewal Workers, the Corio Librarian, the Speech Therapist - 26 hours each per year.(52 weeks in a year and regularly contacting people at least once a fortnight)**

The willingness and helpfulness demonstrated by these people enabled the projects to progress with cohesiveness which often allowed seamlessness between different departments. The schools supported playgroups, Northern Networks supported the Kindergartens, MCH supported the Child Care Centres and the Kindergartens. The Speech Therapist supported the Library.

The Universal Service Providers in Corio were passionate about supporting the families in Corio but understood intrinsically that cooperating together will lessen gaps in services, will avoid duplication and will strengthen their own service. It is an enormous commitment by the organisations and the Best Start Partnership acknowledges the Best Start Project was able to implement the projects with the willingness and positive attitude of the services involved.

5. Sustainability of Core Projects

Links and discussion are developing for the following projects with the appropriate organisation.

1. Playgroup Facilitator Network- City of Greater Geelong (A Fairer Victoria – Playgroup Facilitator) and Rosewall Neighbourhood House.

Bethany, Corio Bay College and Glastonbury developing strong links with the Rosewall Playgroup Network as a platform of connection with the Kindergartens, Primary Schools and young families in the Corio area.

2. Absenteeism Project- Department of Education and Training

3. 'Let's Read' –a strategic plan is being developed in consultation with the Smith Family, Shell, City of Greater Geelong and Geelong Regional Library Corporation.

4. Dental Health Project- Barwon Health Dental Services and Dental Health Services Victoria are implementing the Smiles 4 Miles Project. Strong links with the Deakin University and Barwon Health Project 'Romp and Chomp'

6. Facilitators Role

This role involves working with parents and the service providers to identify the needs in the community. To plan what is appropriate for this local community. The role is to connect people and services together, to allow opportunity for discussion to tease out the best initiatives to support families and services to bring about sustainable choices and change.

The role is to explore new ways of 'working together'-recognising the value of past 'workings' but allowing for new approaches. To be aware to include all the services but not to add 'pressure' to services who are already dealing with great challenges. Invite the broader community to participate in projects to support building community capacity for the future. To continually reflect what is working, what is not and recognise the capacity of some projects to link together. The role is to ensure, with the Working Groups, to implement the initiatives and follow up with progress reports.

7. The role primarily has maintained the same due to the Partnership and the Working Groups remaining the same and all having a similar philosophical and practical agenda. The intensity of the role lessened as the project unfolded and trust was built among all the participants, parents and workers.

The Community Consultations, the development of the Action and smaller, exploratory initiatives in the first year required constant contact to ensure that we were on the 'same' path. It was an incredible 'learning' year for everyone to get the concept of how health, education and community could all work together. The 2nd year allowed larger projects to be implemented and with that a more 'shared' workload with the facilitator's of the nominated projects. The Working Groups had a clearer vision of their roles and projects identified. The 3rd year is working to sustain the Projects that we have evidence that are beneficial to this community and the universal services.

8. The re-current funding is essential to build on the projects. Local communities have their own unique needs. Barriers for families need to be recognised to help families take that next 'step' to bring about changes in their lives. This always needs to be identified-there is not an exact template for each community. Access to services (existence of services helps too) and links to service does help families to make improved choices for their children.

